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EXAMINER

EKONG, EMEM

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2617

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	01/03/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 10/02/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant's argument Gortz fails to disclose holding unit with a number of operation control slots each adapted to receive one of the operational control units is not persuasive for the reason that applicant discloses that Gortz discloses driver system comprising operating device with at least two operational control units, if Gortz discloses at least two operational control units then they must be holding unit with operational control slots to receive one of the operational control units (see figure 2), furthermore, units 12.1 and 12.2 are freely arrangeable as shown in the figure above.

Gortz further discloses information communication system in motor vehicles that have user interfaces in order to permit dialogue between the user and the application units of the system. Gortz discloses mobile telephones as an application unit for inputting for example voice commands, letters and numbers and output means of the user interface for outputting information upon receiving operation function, inherently control signals are wirelessly transmitted.

Therefore the argued limitations are the same as disclosed by the reference, rejections are maintained as repeated below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 1, 3, 10, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 6,629,183 B1 to Gortz et al..

Regarding claim 1, Gortz et al. discloses driver information system (col. 1 lines 13-25) comprising an operating device having at least two operational control units and a holding unit with a number of operational control slots each adapted to receive one of the operational control units (see figure 2, col. 1 lines 20-26, and col. 4 lines 3-4), and a control device for validating control signals delivered by the operational control units (col. 4 lines 1-4, tactile/haptic driver), wherein said operational control units are freely arrangeable with respect to the slots of holding device (see figure 2), each of said operational control units comprises a transmitting unit, and said control device is associated with a receiving unit in order to receive the control signals provided by the transmitting unit (col. 5 lines 59-61).

Regarding claim 3, Gortz et al. discloses the driver information system of claim 1, wherein the transmitting unit transmits said control signals optically (col. 2 lines 61-64, col. 4 lines 13-14, and claim 5).

Regarding claim 10, Gortz et al. discloses the driver information system of claim 1, wherein said operation control unit is one of an operating element, volume control element, a hard-key element etc (col. 1 lines 20-25).

Regarding claim 12, Gortz et al. discloses driver information system (col. 1 lines 13-25) comprising an operating device having at least two operational control units and a holding unit with a number of operational control slots each adapted to receive one of the operational control units (see figure 2, col. 1 lines 20-26, and col. 4 lines 3-4), and a control device for validating control signals delivered by the operational control units (col. 4 lines 1-4, tactile/haptic driver), said operational control units being freely arrangeable with respect to the slots of the holding device(see figure 2), wherein each of said operational control units comprises a transmitting unit for transmitting said control signals wirelessly (col. 2 lines 61-64, col. 4 lines 13-14, and claim 5), and said control device is associated with a receiving unit, in order to receive the control signals provided by the transmitting unit (col. 4 lines 1-4, tactile/haptic driver interface).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

6. Claims 4, 5, 8, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gortz et al. in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,947,760 B2 to Weisshaar et al.

Regarding claims 4, 5, and 8, Gortz et al. discloses the driver information system of claim 2. However, Gortz et al. fails to disclose wherein the receiving unit transmits said control signals via radio frequency; wherein said transmitting, unit and said receiving unit are adapted for transmitting using the bluetooth protocol;

wherein said operational control are supported movably relative to each other by the holding unit.

Weisshaar et al. discloses wherein the receiving unit transmits said control signals via radio frequency; wherein said transmitting, unit and said receiving unit are adapted for transmitting using the bluetooth protocol (col. 4 lines 24-51);

wherein said operational control are supported movably relative to each other by the holding unit (Weisshaar et al. see figure 1).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the invention of Gortz et al., and have the receiving unit

Art Unit: 2617

transmit control signals via radio frequency; wherein said transmitting, unit and said receiving unit are adapted for transmitting using the bluetooth protocol; and wherein said operational control are supported movably relative to each other by the holding unit as disclosed by Weisshaar et al. for the purpose of the components communicating with each other.

Regarding claim 13, Gortz et al. discloses driver information system (col. 1 lines 13-25) comprising an operating device having at least two operational control units and a holding unit with a number of operational control slots each adapted to receive one of the operational control units (see figure 2, col. 1 lines 20-26, and col. 4 lines 3-4), and a control device for validating control signals delivered by the operational control units (col. 4 lines 1-4, tactile/haptic driver), said operational control units being freely arrangeable with respect to the slots of the holding device (see figure 2), and said control device is associated with a receiving unit, in order to receive the control signals provided by the transmitting unit (col. 4 lines 1-4, tactile/haptic driver interface).

However, Gortz et al. fails to disclose wherein each of said operational control units comprises a transmitting unit for transmitting said control signals optically.

Weisshaar et al. disclose wherein each of said operational control units comprises a transmitting unit for transmitting said control signals optically (col. 4 lines 24-51).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the invention of Gortz et al., and have the operational

Art Unit: 2617

control units comprises a transmitting unit for transmitting said control signals optically as disclosed by Weisshaar et al. for the purpose of the components communicating with each other.

7. Claims 6, 7, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gortz et al. in view of U. S. Patent No. 5,528,235 to Lin et al..

Regarding claims 6, 7, and 9, Gortz et al. discloses the driver information system according to claim 1, however, Gortz et al. fails to disclose wherein the holding unit comprises preset number of operational control slots, which are each adapted to receive operational control units,

wherein each operational unit comprises at least one frame connector which is insertable in an edge-socket-connector provided in each said operational control slot, the control signals being transmitted by wire via said connector-socket connection;

wherein each operational control unit comprises a mounting member provided at a operational control unit slot and engaging said mounting member detachably.

Weisshaar et al. discloses wherein the holding unit comprises preset number of operational control slots, which are each adapted to receive operational control units (see figure1);

wherein each operational unit comprises at least one frame connector which is insertable in an edge-socket-connector provided in each said operational control slot, the control signals being transmitted by wire via said connector-socket connection (col. 5 lines 44-54);

Art Unit: 2617

wherein each operational control unit comprises a mounting member provided at a operational control unit slot and engaging said mounting member detachably (see figure 1).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the invention of Gortz et al., and have the holding unit comprises preset number of operational control slots, which are each adapted to receive operational control units each operational unit comprises at least one frame connector which is insertable in an edge-socket-connector provided in each said operational control slot, the control signals being transmitted by wire via said connector-socket connection; wherein each operational control unit comprises a mounting member provided at a operational control unit slot and engaging said mounting member detachably as disclosed by Weisshaar et al. for the purpose of communicating signals.

8. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gortz et al. in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,304,803 to Dao.

Regarding claim 11, Gortz et al. discloses the driver information system of claim 1, however, Gortz et al. discloses wherein operational control units comprise identical cover plates.

Dao discloses the driver information system of claim 1, however, Gortz et al. discloses wherein operational control units comprise identical cover plates (see figure 2).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the invention of Gortz et al., and have the operational control units comprise identical cover plates as disclosed by Dao for appearance purpose.

9. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gortz et al. in view of U. S. Patent No. 4,366,482 to Remes et al..

Regarding claim 14, Gortz et al. discloses driver information system (col. 1 lines 13-25) comprising an operating device having at least two operational control units and a holding unit with a number of operational control slots each adapted to receive one of the operational control units(see figure 2, col. 1 lines 20-26, and col. 4 lines 3-4), and a control device for validating control signals delivered by the operational control units(col. 4 lines 1-4, tactile/haptic driver), said operational control units being freely arrangeable with respect to the slots of the holding device (see figure 2), and said control device is associated with a receiving unit, in order to receive the control signals provided by the transmitting unit (col. 4 lines 1-4, tactile/haptic driver interface).

However, Gortz et al. fails to disclose wherein each of said operational control units comprises a transmitting unit for transmitting said control signals optically.

Remes et al. discloses wherein each of said operational control units comprises a transmitting unit for transmitting said control signals by radio frequency (col. 2 line 65-col. 3 line 30).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the invention of Gortz et al., and have the operational control units comprise a transmitting unit for transmitting said control signals by radio frequency as disclosed by Remes et al. for the purpose of the communicating signals.

Conclusion

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to EMEM EKONG whose telephone number is 571 272 8129. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5 Mon-Fri..

Art Unit: 2617

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lester Kincaid can be reached on 571 272 7922. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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